*Academic Writing for University Students*, 1st Edition Teaching Notes

The book is designed to avoid lengthy theoretical instructions. Instead, the emphasis is on involving students as much as possible in writing activities, both individually or in pairs or groups, as teachers choose. In the first unit, for example, each of the first three sections asks students to complete short exercises. Teachers should use their discretion about how closely the book is followed: not all students will need to complete all the exercises.

Note that some exercises could be usefully completed by students working in pairs to discuss the questions, but this is not always included in the instructions. Teachers need to decide when this would be helpful.

## Using the answer key

Teachers will appreciate that while some writing exercises have one definite answer, others are ‘open’ exercises with many possible responses. In these cases, a model answer is usually provided to give students an accurate example. However, teachers should emphasise that these models are only a guide and that other answers may be equally valid.

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# Part 1: The Writing Process

This is organised as a comprehensive introduction to the process of academic writing. Depending on the level of the students, each unit should take two to three hours of classroom time. Extra practice material can be found on the website for some units. The cross references (e.g. ***See Unit 3.3 Definitions***) are provided for students who require extra detail but are not necessary for completing the exercises.

## 1.1 Writing Basics

This unit introduces students to the differences between academic writing and other genres. The main features of academic papers are outlined, with their usual formats. Sentence and paragraph structure are also explained. The level may be rather elementary for some students, in which case the unit can be studied briefly as revision material.

1 & 2 explain what makes academic writing distinctive from other forms of writing.

3 & 4 These introduce the names of the various tasks that students may have to write as part of their studies, and the format of common assignments.

Note that academic journals will mainly be used by students at master’s level and above.

5 Most students know the names of these components, but they are worth revising.

6 & 7 Balancing short and longer sentences is dealt with in more detail in Unit 3.8 Style. Writing paragraphs is practised in Unit 1.10. At this stage students just need to be aware of a paragraph’s function and importance.

## 1.2 Understanding Essay Questions and the Planning Process

This unit provides practice for both exam and coursework planning, although in the latter case there is time to modify the outline. The planning process should help students to write better answers by carefully analysing the titles of essays.

1 & 2 emphasise the importance of planning and introduces some of the most important instruction words. (2) explains that many essay titles have two parts.

3 practises instruction words and could be completed in pairs to promote discussion. Note that some of the meanings are quite similar.

4 provides an example of fairly typical evaluation criteria used on one course. It is worth emphasising the breakdown of marks for each section. Students should be encouraged to find out if similar criteria exist on their courses.

5 explains brainstorming in the context of exam essays.

6 discusses the issue of essay length. It is important to decide how much space to give to each part of the answer, so that time is not wasted. However, the answers to the exercise can only be approximate.

7 provides models of outlines in alternative formats.

8 practises using the skills developed in this unit. It might be useful to set this as homework to assess the progress made by individual students.

## 1.3 Reading: Finding Suitable Sources

This unit deals with the need to be selective when searching for reliable sources, in order not to waste time reading unsuitable material.

1 This could also be completed in pairs or small groups, and ideally the teacher would show students examples of some of these sources.

2 Much depends on the subject a student is studying, but it is helpful for all students to be aware of the three resource levels.

3 This contrasts three texts on the topic of water scarcity. Students could be asked to work in groups of three, each student reading one text and sharing their opinions with the others in the group.

4 - 6 Students need to practise using search engines by themselves after studying these sections.

7 Reading abstracts should be linked to the introduction to journals in the previous unit. Remind students that abstracts allow them to choose which articles are worth reading.

8 & 9 These provide further approaches to searching for suitable sources.

10 & 11 Learning effective reading methods is vital for students at this level. The practice exercise (11) will reinforce this approach.

## 1.4 Reading: Developing Critical Approaches

Adopting a critical approach to sources involves questioning and evaluating what is read, rather than just accepting it. To do that, students must achieve a good level of understanding of the texts.

1 introduces critical thinking. It is essential that students appreciate the importance of this approach, and teachers should assess their understanding before moving on.

2 asks students to assess texts in terms of objectivity: whether texts mix opinion with fact, and whether the facts are true.

3 provides a comparison examples of two internet sources, one of which is plainly unreliable.

4 explains that domain names can provide useful clues about the objectivity of internet sources.

5 & 6 offer further practice in the critical reading of texts. (5) could usefully be tackled in pairs, while if (6) is answered individually it will provide teachers with an insight into how well students have developed their critical reading skills.

## 1.5 Finding Key Points and Note-making

Good note-making depends on students identifying the key sections of a text which are relevant to their area of interest. Students should avoid copying sections of text or writing notes in their own language. Although initially note-making may be a slow process, once these skills are developed it becomes an essential technique.

2 demonstrates that key ideas are often found in the first sentence of a paragraph.

3 explains that students need to focus only on the points relevant to their research.

4 provides an example of the note-making process.

5 gives guidelines and suggestions for good practice in note-making.

6 links back to the text in (3) to practice the techniques given in (5).

7 offers further practice in these skills. Again, the notes need to relate to the title of the essay.

## 1.6 Avoiding Plagiarism

This unit introduces students to the concept of plagiarism. It illustrates acceptable ways of acknowledging sources through citation and also introduces the vital skills of summarising and paraphrasing. Note that these skills, and referencing, are the subject of later units (Units 1.7 and 1.8).

1 provides examples of the correct use of citation with both summaries and quotations.

2 defines plagiarism and explains why students need to understand its dangers.

3 provides an example of the simplest form of plagiarism.

4 explains that plagiarism can take many forms, some less obvious than others. It should be answered by students working in groups or pairs to promote discussion.

5 gives examples of summarising and paraphrasing a short text, in both acceptable and unacceptable ways. This illustrates some of the situations in (4).

7 provides revision of the citation process.

8 revises some of the key vocabulary used in this unit.

## Progress Check A

Teachers should use these Progress Checks to establish how well students have assimilated the preceding sections. However, they do not have to be treated as an exam. They could be completed in pairs, to promote discussion, or for homework, as teachers see fit.

## 1.7 References and Quotations

Referencing is an essential skill at any level of higher education. This unit revises some material from Unit 1.6 Avoiding Plagiarism and goes on to provide examples of accurate referencing. However, as this is such a complex subject students need to use a more detailed source for full details of the referencing system used by their school or department - see website for links.

1 reminds students of the reasons for referencing. The exercise could be completed in pairs

2 revises the methods of giving citations for summaries and quotations.

3 & 4 introduce and practise verbs of reference, sometimes known as ‘referring verbs’.

5 explains the range of reference systems. Individual students need to follow this up by studying the details of the system that their department expects them to use.

6 explains how quotations can be employed in students’ work. As with other sections, there is a lot of detail here which students will want to refer to when they are writing assignments.

7 provides practice with introducing summaries and quotations with correct citation.

8, 9 & 10 deal with three further issues in this area: the special abbreviations used in citations, giving secondary references and internet references.

11 focuses on writing a list of references for the end of a paper. The example is of the Harvard system, which will not apply to all students, but most aspects of this model are relevant to the other systems.

Note that although this exercise introduces most basic features of referencing, many more types of sources (e.g. oral testimony) may need to be referenced, which is why students need to use a comprehensive website for full details.

## 1.8 Summarising and Paraphrasing

Although it is simpler to teach these two activities separately, in practice they tend to be employed together, and this should be explained to students. This unit deals with summarising first and then moves on to paraphrasing.

1 introduces the subject by demonstrating that summarising is an activity that everyone uses in normal life.

2 establishes the order in which a summary is carried out. It would be useful to do this exercise in pairs.

3 compares three summaries of a text and asks students to rank them. Again, this could be completed in pairs or small groups.

4 revises finding key points and then goes on to use these to build the summary, emphasising the flexible nature of summaries, which can be shortened or lengthened according to the writer’s needs.

5 provides additional practice and could be set for homework.

6 introduces paraphrasing, with an example.

7 asks students to evaluate three paraphrases of a short text. As with (3) this is suitable for pair work.

8 demonstrates three techniques that are widely used in paraphrasing. Although these can be taught separately and are practised distinctly in the following exercise (9), students should be told that it is common to use them together.

9 & 10 practise paraphrasing techniques separately and jointly.

## 1.9 Contrasting Sources

This unit explains that in the introductory section of a paper it is usual to refer to the work of other writers on a topic. These writers may deal with different aspects of the same subject. Students are expected to follow this pattern in their own writing.

1 gives an example of this format, on the subject of student expectations of higher education, which students are asked to analyse. As an introductory section this could be completed in pairs.

2 This is a follow-up exercise using the same topic. It could be set as homework.

3 presents a series of contrasting short texts on the gender pay gap. The exercise looks at the way the differing views are summarised in the third text.

4 presents a range of possible phrases for presenting and contrasting sources.

5 involves reading two texts which present differing theories on the subject of the extinction of dinosaurs and then writing a paragraph which contrasts the different viewpoints. Before the writing task is attempted students must fully understand texts 5.1 and 5.2, so it might be worth setting up groups of three to discuss each text in turn. The writing can then be done individually.

## 1.10 Organising Paragraphs

Paragraphs were briefly introduced in Unit 1.1, and here the focus is on their organisation. Students write more coherently if they think in terms of building an argument in a series of well-linked paragraphs.

1 analyses an example paragraph on the topic of decentralisation, but it should be explained that paragraphs can consist of many different sentence types - as shown in (2) and (3).

2 & 3 both use paragraphs on the same subject of government decentralisation (it may be necessary to explain this concept to some students). In (2) students must organise the structure of the paragraph by thinking about the function of each sentence. In (3) they must find the functions and identify the cohesion of the paragraph.

4 revises this work by presenting the full text and asking students to analyse the text by completing the chart.

5 gives phrases for starting paragraphs and linking them together.

6 asks students to write two paragraphs on trams, using the notes, to practice organising their structure using conjunctions and other phrases.

7 provides further practice if needed by any students.

## 1.11 Introductions and Conclusions

Unit 1.5 discussed the space needed for introductions and conclusions. Here the aim is to clarify the components generally found in these sections of an essay, along with the standard order in which they are presented. However, it should be explained that there is no ‘normal’ format, and much will depend on the length and purpose of the paper. It is worth reminding students that for coursework introductions are normally written after the main body is completed.

1 a) is best completed in pairs, to give opportunity for discussion. Part (b) may be better studied individually at first and then discussed by the whole class.

2 gives an example introduction, containing seven components generally found in introductions. Again, it should be stressed that not every essay introduction will contain all of these.

3 deals with a common issue - getting started on writing. By practising with some of these titles (or others selected by the teacher) this difficulty may be overcome. Get students to compare their sentences and criticise each others’ suggestions.

4 & 5 follow the same pattern as (1) with conclusions. There is perhaps more variation with the structure of conclusions than with introductions and much depends on the topic. However, it should be stressed that every paper needs a final section that includes most of these components.

6 links back to the essay introduced in (2). Here, the components of the conclusion must be re-organised in a logical way.

## 1.12 Editing and Proofreading

This unit explains the final stages of the writing process. Editing is clearly not possible in exams, but proofreading should be attempted both in exams and for coursework.

1 & 2 suggest guidelines for editing and provide an example of a flawed introduction which students are asked to comment on. This is followed by an improved version which contains some of the suggestions made above. It might be helpful to ask students to complete 2) in pairs or groups.

3 continues the same introduction and requires students to repeat the process of criticism and rewriting. It may be helpful for some students to look at Unit 3.8 Style.

4 introduces proofreading. The difficulty that students face here is identifying relatively minor errors which can, nevertheless, confuse the reader.

5 is designed to raise student awareness of the most common areas of error.

6, 7 & 8 practise proofreading at both sentence and paragraph level.

9 is designed to remind students that editing and proofreading are two distinct stages and should be carried out separately.

# Part 2: Writing Types

This part presents and practises some of the different types of text students may have to complete as part of a longer paper. Many essays and reports will require a literature review or a case study, for example, and may include a discussion section or a problem that needs to be solved. Teachers can decide whether to integrate these units into Part 1, The Writing Process (e.g. 2.5 Literature Reviews could be taught with 1.9 Contrasting Sources) or to use them on a remedial basis: much will depend on the level of the students.

Note that the units in Parts 2, 3 and 4 can be taught in any order. They can also be used by individual students on a self-study basis.

## 2.1 Argument and Discussion

‘Discuss’ is a common instruction in essay titles. This unit presents two ways of organising a discussion-type essay, and practises some of the relevant vocabulary.

1 presents discussion language. Note that ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ are rather informal and best avoided in written work. Students could be asked to discuss the issues around online learning before attempting the writing task.

2 Many students will be familiar with the ‘vertical’ essay pattern, but it is useful

to study the alternative ‘horizontal’ version which allows a more complex approach.

3 The brainstorming element could be usefully completed in pairs or groups and then the outlines written individually.

4 gives examples of impersonal phrases to present a viewpoint. The issue of style is dealt with more fully in Unit 3.8.

5 In this section the topic of early language learning is used for practice, and if necessary, it may be worth asking students to discuss their own experiences of this.

6 practises the use of counter-arguments, which are critical in convincing a reader that you have examined all sides of a case.

7 examines the use of sources to support an argument. These skills were also practised in Unit 1.9 Contrasting Sources. It may be worth discussing the subject of ‘digital natives’ before answering the questions, so that all students are familiar with the idea.

8 The topic of the legalisation of marijuana should be familiar to most students, but again it could be useful to hold a brief discussion on the topic first.

9 is an optional extension activity designed to encourage discussion before writing.

## 2.2 Cause and Effect

To introduce this unit it may be worth eliciting examples of cause and effect from the students’ fields of study.

1 asks students to identify the causes and effects in a short text, which provides a simple example of the process.

2 presents a series of structures using verbs or conjunctions which emphasise either the cause or the effect. Students could be asked to write similar sentences relevant to their studies.

3 This exercise has two parts. The matching exercise (which can be done in pairs) needs to be completed and checked before moving on to the writing.

4 Here the students have to imagine possible effects and causes. Weaker students may benefit from working with a classmate.

5 The topic of workplace dissatisfaction could be introduced as a question that is as yet unanswered, and students can be asked for their views.

6 presents a series of causes and effects in a flow chart. Talk these through with the class before completing the paragraph to ensure that all the students are familiar with the scenario.

## 2.3 Problems and Solutions

Clearly this unit links to the material presented in 2.1 Argument and Discussion, but in this case the focus is on paragraph organisation. Teachers may choose to teach these two units successively.

1 provides and practises some relevant vocabulary.

2 & 3 demonstrate alternative methods of responding to the same problem, depending on viewpoint. Students could be asked to write their own solution to the problem of traffic congestion.

4 introduces a new problem (housing) and asks students to rewrite the paragraph with an alternative conclusion. It may be worth reading the text through with the class to check that it is fully understood and breaking it down into component sentences as with (2) and (3) above.

5 provides further practice, with a current environmental issue. Encourage the students to make their own evaluations of the solutions.

6 should be started in pairs, as this will generate more possibilities. Each student could then write their own solution.

In the case of (7) students need to provide their own problem from their field.

## 2.4 Case Studies

1 The matching exercise provides examples of the possible scope of case studies. Asking students about the disadvantages or limitations of these could be done after reading section 2.

2 How this is taught will depend on how familiar students are with the subject. As ever, concrete examples in their own disciplines will be helpful.

3 If there is enough time students could be asked to research local dams or projects from their own countries. This could be a good opportunity to practise the search skills taught in Unit 1.3 Reading: Finding Suitable Sources.

4 Many students will be familiar with IKEA, which should provide some context for this example. The final questions could be discussed in pairs or small groups.

## 2.5 Literature Reviews

1 The topic has been introduced in Unit 1.9 Combining Sources, but this section provides a fuller explanation of the function of a literature review.

2 provides several examples of short literature reviews to demonstrate their possible structure.

3 breaks down the process of writing into a series of stages.

4 gives a longer model review on the topic of motivation. It may be necessary to introduce this subject to students by asking questions about what motivates them.

## 2.6 Writing Longer Papers

1 It may be worth initially discussing students’ experience of writing longer papers. This will determine how thoroughly they need to study the sections of this unit.

2 Organisation is the key to successfully completing longer papers, which typically have a time frame of eight weeks or so. It is worth emphasising the importance of starting to write a draft fairly early in the process.

3 Note that not all the features included in the table will be needed in every paper.

## 2.7 Reports

1 aims to elicit the distinction between the two most common types of undergraduate writing.

2 provides an example of a common structure for reports, with an exercise to illustrate the differences discussed in (1).

3 Scientific reports have some features in common with other types of academic writing, but this section provides an outline of a basic report. Students specialising in e.g. Biology will be given more detailed instructions by their teachers.

4 The example report on student accommodation is short but includes the basic features as illustrated in section (1). However, there are many ways it could be improved, and students could be asked to work in pairs to answer the questions at the end of this section.

## 2.8 Reflective Writing

Before starting this unit, it may be worth finding out what experience students have of this kind of task. This will influence how much time is spent on explaining its purpose.

1 If students are new to the concept, the diagram illustrating the cycle of the process should help to clarify it.

2 After reading the text students could discuss the two questions in pairs or groups. It may be useful to compare the style here with the style of the report in the previous unit.

3 This exercise asks the students to analyse the text in 2). It is important to stress that the interpretation and outcome are the critical sections.

4 Reflective writing is one of the few genres where a more personal, subjective style is required.

5 It is important to complete the task with a partner since this should be more productive.

6 The proposal for a learning journal need not be obligatory, but it may be helpful for certain students.

## Part 3 Writing Tools

Part 3 presents and practises the skills needed to write any kind of academic work, such as using examples, making comparisons and providing correct punctuation. Presented in alphabetical order, these writing tools can be accessed for reference as needed or linked to certain units in Part 1 The Writing Process (e.g. 3.8 Style with 1.12 Editing and Proofreading.

## 3.1 Cohesion

1 illustrates the use of reference words to achieve cohesion.

2 requires students to identify the reference words in a short text.

3 highlights a common problem when the overuse of reference words causes a lack of clarity.

4 asks students to insert reference words into a text.

5 explains why and when certain words may be omitted; something that often confuses non-native speakers.

6 demonstrates another situation where reference words are needed: to avoid clumsy repetition.

7 revises reference words with a gap-fill exercise.

8 practises writing a full paragraph, focusing on the cohesion provided by reference words.

## 3.2 Comparison

As a warmer for this subject ask students to compare weather/prices/food in two different places e.g. ‘the weather here is wetter and warmer than in my country’. This will be echoed in the final exercise in the unit comparing Barcelona with a city known to the student.

1 offers revision of the basic structures of comparison. Note that Unit 3.6 Numbers offers more practice with quantitative comparison.

2 This exercise illustrates the use of comparison in a short text.

3 reminds students of the use of superlatives.

4 revises the structures presented in the first section.

5 deals with several areas of difficulty such as comparing rates.

6 provides further revision by asking students to identify errors. This could be usefully completed in pairs.

7 is a gap-fill exercise best completed individually, to practice writing a paragraph analysing data from a table. Note that Unit 3.6 Numbers and Visual Information gives similar practice.

8 provides extra practice; a strong group may not need to complete this.

9 asks students to write a comparison of Barcelona with a city they know, perhaps the capital of their country. Clearly, they do not need to know all the details of their city: these can be invented if necessary.

## 3.3 Definitions

It is worth pointing out that students will only have to define concepts within their own subject, and that this definition is important to establish exactly what is being discussed. If necessary, give an example such as ‘globalisation’, which is a term widely used but not always clearly understood.

1 gives the structure of simple definitions.

2 The first part focuses on finding the correct category word to complete each sentence, and then students are required to complete definitions with both category words and applications.

3 shows examples of more complex definitions taken from journal articles. They illustrate various ways of providing definitions in academic work.

4 asks students to choose several topics from essay titles and to define them. Note that although students are told to choose three topics, this can of course be varied, so strong students could attempt all five while weaker students just do one or two.

5 To introduce this exercise the teacher could elicit examples of terms and their definitions from the class before starting to work individually.

## 3.4 Examples

Including appropriate examples is a vital part of most academic writing, and this unit practises the language for introducing these.

1 explains the common pattern of generalisation followed by example. Students could be asked to suggest similar sentences from their own studies. The text on drones illustrates the use of examples.

2 lists the main phrases used, most of which will be familiar to students. In the exercise students need to find suitable examples, and these could first be suggested in whole class discussion if necessary.

3 offers practice in including examples at paragraph level. With weaker students read through the text first to check for comprehension, before asking students to insert the examples.

4 is a similar exercise, but here students have to provide their own examples. Again, read through the text first if necessary to check that phrases such as ‘host country’ are understood.

5 deals with restatement, which is usually used as repetition to check complete understanding. Students will certainly meet these phrases in their reading.

## 3.5 Generalisations

Basic generalising is quite simple and can be useful, but in an academic context it is important to avoid over-generalising, thus creating simplification.

1 introduces the need for caution in generalisations. The exercise could be completed in pairs, to encourage discussion.

2 Note that the first structure, using the plural, is both more normal and probably easier for students to use.

3 & 4 offer practice in writing simple generalisations.

5 illustrates the use of generalisation in a text and shows how they tend to be supported by examples.

6 demonstrates how an introductory generalisation is developed. In the writing exercise students should be able to find a topic related to their experience or studies.

## 3.6 Numbers and Visual Information

In most fields of study students are expected to include statistical evidence to support their ideas, in the form of graphs, tables and other devices. These are particularly important in fields such as Business and Economics. This unit illustrates the more common types of visual devices, but students may meet more complex examples in textbooks and journals.

1 deals with the basic vocabulary of numbers. Non-native speakers may find numbers a challenging topic, so it may be worth providing more examples for weaker students, or practising with simple questions: ‘what’s the population of your country?’

2 many students find percentages a confusing subject, but as they are critical in many areas they may need further revision.

3 introduces words and phrases which may be used, in certain circumstances, as alternatives to numbers. Students will certainly meet these in their reading.

4 provides a range of expressions which can be used to simplify numerical information. Students should be clear that these are effective in some, but not all situations, but familiarity with them will improve reading comprehension.

5 gives practice in writing about statistical data.

6 asks students to match nine basic types of visuals with the examples.

7 presents the language of line graphs. International students may have problems with some of the irregular past tenses e.g. grow/grew.

8 provides some language for describing charts. For further practice students could be asked to describe some of the charts in (1).

9 explains that correct labelling is important, especially in longer papers with many visuals.

10 & 11 provide further practice with describing tables and charts. Students can be reminded that they should only mention the most significant features of the chart. Stronger students may not need to complete both exercises.

## 3.5 Punctuation

This unit provides a lot of detailed information which weaker students may find hard to process at first; they can be encouraged to use it as a reference source as their writing develops.

1-8 Although some areas of punctuation are in a state of flux, notably the use of capitals, commas and hyphens, it is still useful to know the rules which apply to most areas. Correct punctuation is important to help the reader understand the writer’s ideas, and is especially critical with lists of references, to demonstrate an awareness of academic conventions.

9 This exercise is suitable for completion in pairs.

10 is a demanding task. It may be helpful to tell students to first break it up into sentences and then to add other punctuation marks.

## 3.8 Style

This is one of the most critical areas students encounter, and one of the hardest to teach. This is partly because different disciplines may employ somewhat different styles. The guidelines in this unit should provide an indication of what is acceptable, but in the end, students have to develop their own version.

1 asks students to identify examples of poor style in a short text. Most of the examples highlighted are explained in 2). Working in pairs on this provides an opportunity for useful discussion.

2 In academic articles it is quite easy to find examples of these guidelines being broken! However, if students attempt to follow these guidelines, they should avoid major pitfalls.

3 provides further practise in following the guidelines given.

4 Repetition and redundancy are often caused by carelessness and failure to re-read work critically. Good writing balances concision with providing sufficient detail. Note that the exercise contains some material which is irrelevant to the subject and hence redundant.

5 On balance it is better for weaker students to write shorter sentences rather than attempt to link too many ideas together. This exercise suggests a balanced approach.

6 Caution was previously discussed in Unit 3.5 Generalisations. Although there are situations where it is inappropriate, in general a cautious style is worth developing.

7 practises the common modifiers.

8 These sentences can be made more cautious by using the language explained in (6) and (7).

# Part 4: Lexis

As an introduction to methods of developing vocabulary, Unit 4.1 Approaches to Vocabulary could be usefully taught in class. But if time is limited it may be better to set other units as homework or use them on a remedial basis, or for self-study as needed.

## 4.1 Approaches to Vocabulary

1 The text highlights a frequent issue in vocabulary learning: understanding the rather formal language found in academic articles. The other sections of this unit suggest possible methods of dealing with this.

2 encourages students to be selective in which words they try to learn and focus their efforts on the most important items.

3 presents some useful vocabulary for discussing language features and provides examples: not all of these need to be learned, but students will meet many of them in their studies. Note that some of these, such as clichés or proverbs, should be avoided.

4 presents some of the commonest sources of confusion. It is also important to practise the pronunciation of these pairs: ‘site’ and ‘sight’ are homophones, but ‘lose’ and ‘loose’ are quite distinct.

5 These words and phrases are commonly found in journal articles. Although it is not necessary to learn them, it is useful to be aware of them.

7 Not all students will need this guide, but for some it will be useful to understand the various types of abbreviations.

8 Although abbreviations can be found in a dictionary, most students will find it helpful to be familiar with the commonest ones. This list offers a brief selection of abbreviations used in the academic context.

11 These abbreviations are commonly found in academic writing and should be understood by all students.

12 The exercise could be supplemented by examining a newspaper to show the diversity and frequency of abbreviations in everyday use.

## 4.2 Academic Vocabulary: Nouns and Adjectives

1 & 2 The list of nouns is not exhaustive but offers a useful starting point. Students should discuss any which are unclear with a partner, so they feel confident in using them in their work.

3 These related adjectives should be easy to understand given the previous

exercise on nouns. But writing example sentences is a demanding task and could be attempted in pairs or groups.

4 These distinctions may be worth practising, as they are frequently confused.

5 Learning adjectives in pairs of opposites is an efficient method. Students can be asked to write further examples to practise any adjectives they are unsure of.

6 The adjectives in the table are quite common, but can still cause problems, so are worth revising. Students should be able to tackle this individually.

7 provides additional practice with nouns and adjectives.

## 4.3 Academic Vocabulary: Verbs and Adverbs

1 Students need to learn to identify main verbs as the key to understanding sentences. This unit introduces the rather formal kind of verbs often used in academic work. Note that synonyms are examined in Unit 4.5.

2 The exercise should be attempted in pairs. Note that as with the nouns, not all the synonyms provided in the Answer Key are exact.

3 It is worth mentioning that adverbs commonly employed in narrative e.g. ‘luckily’ or ‘surprisingly’ are not generally suitable for more objective writing. Students do not need to memorise all the examples, just to understand their main uses in written work.

4 provides practice in using the adverbs from the table in (3) at sentence level.

5 offers further, paragraph level practice if required.

## 4.4 Prefixes and Suffixes

1 Explain to the class that a knowledge of prefixes and suffixes can help expand their vocabulary. Ask them to suggest further examples of words containing both.

The use of hyphens in words with prefixes can be problematic: see Unit 3.7.

2 Students may find the exercise difficult, so the task could be done in pairs.

3 These words are both recent and quite uncommon, so using the prefix to aid understanding is critical.

4 While suffixes play a smaller role in establishing meaning they are very helpful for identifying word class. Students can be asked for further examples of words with meaning suffixes.

5 It may be useful for some students to construct sentences using these words.

## 4.5 Synonyms

1 Synonyms have been introduced in Unit 1.8. Explain to the class that exact synonyms are rare (e.g. in the exercise ‘largest’ has a somewhat different meaning to ‘giant’). However, for most purposes one can be a synonym for the other.

2 The matching exercise is quite demanding. This could usefully be done in small groups to encourage discussion.

3 practises words from the table in (2).

4 provides further examples of the use of synonyms in a short text.

5 requires students to provide suitable synonyms in a paragraph.